



CYSTICOLA EXILIS.

J. Gould and H.C. Richter del et lith.

Ballou sculp & Weston imp.

CYSTICOLA EXILIS.

Exile Warbler.

Exile Warbler, Lath. Gen. Hist., vol. vii. p. 136.

Malurus exilis, Lath. MSS. Vig. and Horsf. in Linn. Trans., vol. xv. p. 223.—Less. Man. d'Orn., tom. i. p. 279.

THIS species appears to have been first noticed by Latham in the seventh volume of his "General History of Birds" under the title of Exile Warbler, and to have been subsequently placed in the genus *Cysticola* by Messrs. Vigors and Horsfield while engaged in naming the collection of Australian birds in the possession of the Linnean Society. Its natural habitat is New South Wales and South Australia, in both of which colonies I observed it to be abundantly dispersed among the thick beds of grasses which clothe the valleys and open plains. I have never received it from either of the other colonies, all of which, however, are inhabited by nearly allied species. It is very retiring in its habits, generally creeping about among the grasses, and will almost admit of being trodden upon before it will rise and take wing; during the months of spring the male becomes somewhat bolder, and early in the morning will frequently perch on the highest of the grasses and pour forth a pretty but feeble song, resembling that of the *Mahuri*. As some confusion existed respecting the sexes of the various species of this genus, I was particular in dissecting all the individuals I shot, and I can therefore state with certainty that the plumage of both sexes of this species is perfectly similar and that the only outward difference between them consists in the female being somewhat smaller than her mate.

I was not able to discover the nest and eggs of this little bird, which doubtless breeds among the grasses, and builds a dome-shaped nest similar to that of its European ally.

Crown of the head, back, wing-coverts, scapularies and tail-feathers brownish black, each feather narrowly margined with buff; sides and back of the neck and all the under surface sandy buff, fading into white on the throat and centre of the abdomen; bill and feet flesh-brown.

The figure represents the bird of the natural size.